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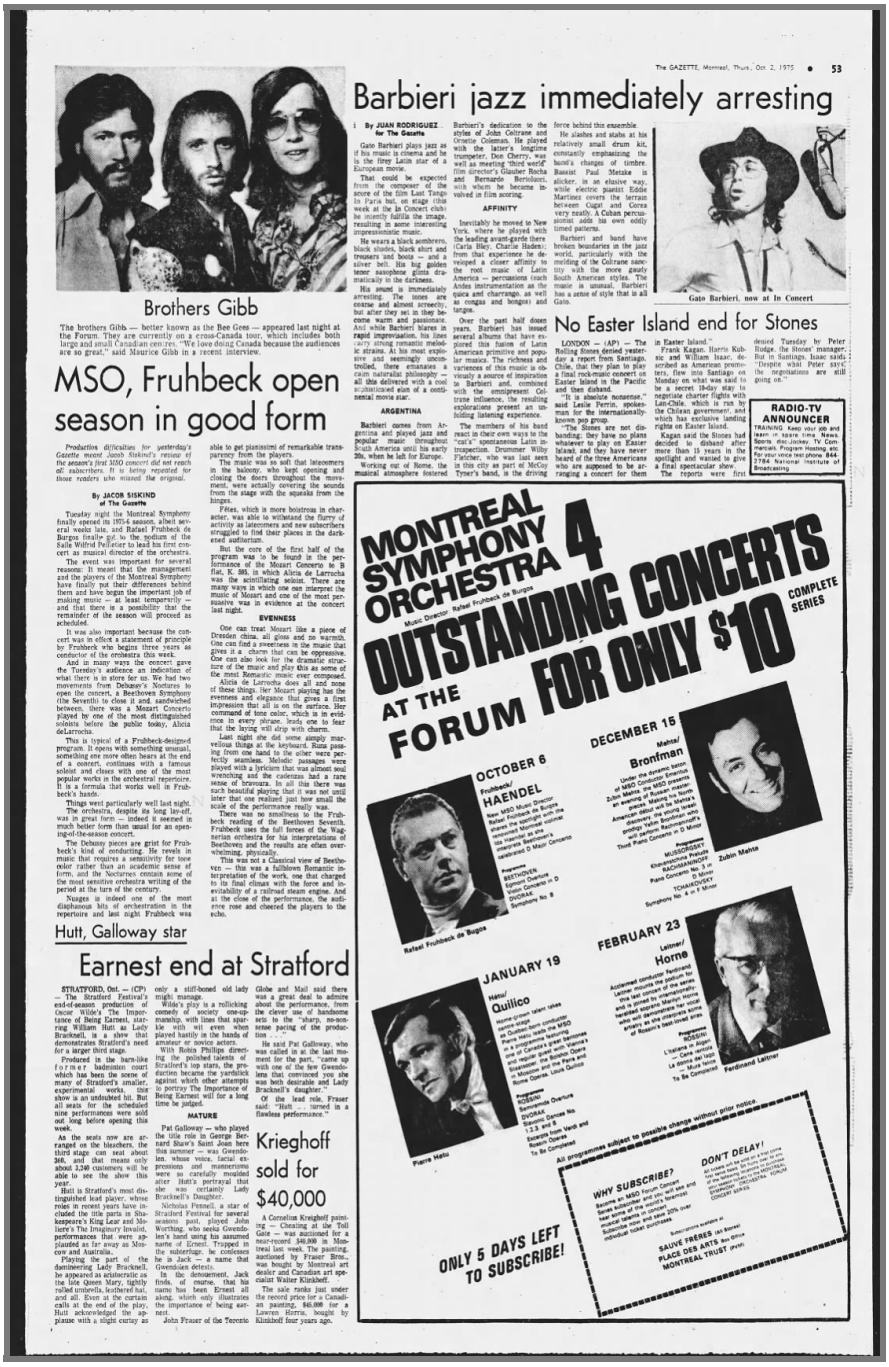

Brothers Gibb

The brothers Gibb — better known as the Bee Gees — appeared last night at the Forum. They are currently on a cross-Canada tour, which includes both large and small Canadian centres. "We love doing Canada because the audiences are so great," said Maurice Gibb in a recent interview.

MSO, Fruhbeck open season in good form

Production difficulties for yesterday's Gazette record Jacob Siskind's review of the season's first MSO concert did not reach all subscribers. It is being repeated for those readers who wanted the original.

By JACOB SISKIND
of The Gazette

Tuesday night the Montreal Symphony finally opened its 1975-6 season, albeit several weeks late, and Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos finally got to the podium of the Salle Wilfrid Pelletier to lead his first concert as musical director of the orchestra.

The event was important for several reasons: It meant that the management and the players of the Montreal Symphony have finally put their differences behind them and have begun the important job of making music — at least temporarily — and that there is a possibility that the remainder of the season will proceed as scheduled.

It was also important because the concert was in effect a statement of principle by Fruhbeck who begins three years as conductor of the orchestra this week.

And in many ways the concert gave the Tuesday's audience an indication of what there is in store for us. We had two movements from Debussy's Nocturnes to open the concert, a Beethoven Symphony (the Seventh) to close it and, sandwiched between, there was a Mozart Concerto played by one of the most distinguished soloists before the public today, Alicia deLarrocha.

This is typical of a Fruhbeck-designed program. It opens with something unusual, something one more often hears at the end of a concert, continues with a famous soloist and closes with one of the most popular works in the orchestral repertoire. It is a formula that works well in Fruhbeck's hands.

Things went particularly well last night.

The orchestra, despite its long lay-off, was in great form — indeed it seemed in much better form than usual for an opening-of-the-season concert.

The Debussy pieces are grist for Fruhbeck's kind of conducting. He revels in music that requires a sensitivity for tone color rather than an academic sense of form, and the Nocturnes contain some of the most sensitive orchestra writing of the period at the turn of the century.

Nuages is indeed one of the most diaphanous bits of orchestration in the repertoire and last night Fruhbeck was able to get pianissimi of remarkable transparency from the players.

The music was so soft that latecomers in the balcony, who kept opening and closing the doors throughout the movement, were actually covering the sounds from the stage with the squeaks from the hinges.

Fêtes, which is more boisterous in character, was able to withstand the flurry of activity as latecomers and new subscribers struggled to find their places in the darkened auditorium.

But the core of the first half of the program was to be found in the performance of the Mozart Concerto in B flat, K. 595, in which Alicia de Larrocha was the scintillating soloist. There are many ways in which one can interpret the music of Mozart and one of the most persuasive was in evidence at the concert last night.

EVENNESS

One can treat Mozart like a piece of Dresden china, all gloss and no warmth. One can find a sweetness in the music that gives it a charm that can be oppressive. One can also look for the dramatic structure of the music and play this as some of the most Romantic music ever composed.

Alicia de Larrocha does all and none of these things. Her Mozart playing has the evenness and elegance that gives a first impression that all is on the surface. Her command of tone color, which is in evidence in every phrase, leads one to fear that the laying will drip with charm.

Last night she did some simply marvellous things at the keyboard. Runs passing from one hand to the other were perfectly seamless. Melodic passages were played with a lyricism that was almost soul wrenching and the cadenzas had a rare sense of bravoura. In all this there was such beautiful playing that it was not until later that one realized just how small the scale of the performance really was.

There was no smallness to the Fruhbeck reading of the Beethoven Seventh. Fruhbeck uses the full forces of the Wagnerian orchestra for his interpretations of Beethoven and the results are often overwhelming, physically.

This was not a Classical view of Beethoven — this was a full-blown Romantic interpretation of the work, one that charged to its final climax with the force and inevitability of a railroad steam engine. And at the close of the performance, the audience rose and cheered the players to the echo.

Hutt, Galloway star

Earnest end at Stratford

STRATFORD, Ont. — (CP) — The Stratford Festival's end-of-season production of Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest, starring William Hutt as Lady Bracknell, is a show that demonstrates Stratford's need for a larger thrust stage.

Produced in the barn-like former badminton court which has been the scene of many of Stratford's smaller, experimental works, this show is an undoubted hit. But all seats for the scheduled nine performances were sold out long before opening this week.

As the seats now are arranged on the bleachers, the third stage can seat about 260, and that means only about 3,240 customers will be able to see the show this year.

Hutt is Stratford's most distinguished lead player, whose roles in recent years have included the title parts in Shakespeare's King Lear and Moliere's The Imaginary Invalid, performances that were applauded as far away as Moscow and Australia.

Playing the part of the domineering Lady Bracknell, he appeared as aristocratic as the late Queen Mary, tightly rolled umbrella, feathered hat, and all. Even at the curtain calls at the end of the play, Hutt acknowledged the applause with a slight curtsy as only a stiff-boned old lady might manage.

Wilde's play is a rollicking comedy of society one-upmanship, with lines that sparkle with wit even when played hastily in the hands of amateur or novice actors.

With Robin Phillips directing the polished talents of Stratford's top stars, the production became the yardstick against which other attempts to portray The Importance of Being Earnest will for a long time be judged.

MATURE

Pat Galloway — who played the title role in George Bernard Shaw's Saint Joan here this summer — was Gwendolen, whose voice, facial expressions and mannerisms were so carefully moulded after Hutt's portrayal that she was certainly Lady Bracknell's Daughter.

Nicholas Pennell, a star of Stratford Festival for several seasons past, played John Worthing, who seeks Gwendolen's hand using his assumed name of Ernest. Trapped in the subterfuge, he confesses he is Jack — a name that Gwendolen detests.

In the denouement, Jack finds, of course, that his name has been Ernest all along, which only illustrates the importance of being earnest.

John Fraser of the Toronto Globe and Mail said there was a great deal to admire about the performance, from the clever use of handsome sets to the "sharp, no-nonsense pacing of the production."

He said Pat Galloway, who was called in at the last moment for the part, "came up with one of the few Gwendolens that convinced you she was both desirable and Lady Bracknell's daughter."

Of the lead role, Fraser said: "Hutt ... turned in a flawless performance."

Krieghoff sold for $40,000

A Cornelius Kreighoff painting — Cheating at the Toll Gate — was auctioned for a near-record $40,000 in Montreal last week. The painting, auctioned by Fraser Bros., was bought by Montreal art dealer and Canadian art specialist Walter Klinkhoff.

The sale ranks just under the record price for a Canadian painting, $45,000 for a Lawren Harris, bought by Klinkhoff four years ago.

Barbieri jazz immediately arresting

By JUAN RODRIGUEZ
for The Gazette

Gato Barbieri plays jazz as if his music is cinema and he is the firey Latin star of a European movie.

That could be expected from the composer of the score of the film Last Tango In Paris but, on stage (this week at the In Concert club) he intently fulfills the image, resulting in some interesting impressionistic music.

He wears a black sombrero, black shades, black shirt and trousers and boots — and a silver belt. His big golden tenor saxophone glints dramatically in the darkness.

His sound is immediately arresting. The tones are coarse and almost screechy, but after they set in they become warm and passionate. And while Barbieri blares in rapid improvisation, his lines carry strong romantic melodic strains. At his most explosive and seemingly uncontrolled, there emanates a calm naturalist philosophy — all the delivered with a cool sophisticated elan of a continental movie star.

ARGENTINA

Barbieri comes from Argentina and played jazz and popular music throughout South America until his early 20s, when he left for Europe.

Working out of Rome, the musical atmosphere fostered Barbieri's dedication to the styles of John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman. He played with the latter's longtime trumpeter, Don Cherry, was well as meeting 'third world' film director's Glauber Rocha and Bernardo Bertolucci, with whom he became involved in film scoring.

AFFINITY

Inevitably he moved to New York, where he played with the leading avant-garde there (Carla Bley, Charlie Haden; from that experience he developed a closer affinity to the root music of Latin America — percussions (such Andes instrumentation as the quica and charrango, as well as congas and bongos) and tangos.

Over the past half dozen years, Barbieri has issued several albums that have explored this fusion of Latin American primitive and popular musics. The richness and variences of this music is obvisually a source of inspiration to Barbieri and, combined with the omnipresent Coltrane influence, the resulting explorations present an unfolding listening experience.

The members of his band react in their own ways to the "cat's" spontaneous Latin introspection. Drummer Willy Fletcher, who was last seen in this city as part of McCoy Tyner's band, is the driving force behind this ensemble.

He slashes and stabs at his relatively small drum kit, constantly emphasizing the band's changes of timbre. Bassist Paul Metzke is slicker, in an elusive way, while electric pianist Eddie Martinez covers the terrain between Gugat and Corea very neatly. A Cuban percussionist adds his own oddly timed patterns.

Barbieri and band have broken boundaries in the jazz world, particularly with the melding of the Coltrane sanctity with the more gaudy South American styles. The music is unusual. Barbieri has a sense of style that is all Gato.

Gato Barbieri, now at In Concert

No Easter Island end for Stones

LONDON — (AP) — The Rolling Stones denied yesterday a report from Santiago, Chile, that they plan to play a final rock-music concert on Easter Island in the Pacific and then disband.

"It is absolute nonsense," said Leslie Perrin, spokesman for the internationally-known pop group.

"The Stones are not disbanding; they have no plans whatever to play on Easter Island, and they have never heard of the three Americans who are supposed to be arranging a concert for them on it Easter Island."

Frank Kagan, Harris Kubsic and William Isaac, described as American promoters, flew into Santiago on Monday on what was said to be a secret 19-day stay to negotiate charter flights with Lan-Chile, which is run by the Chilean government, and which has exclusive landing rights on Easter Island.

Kagan said the Stones had decided to disband after more than 15 years in the spotlight and wanted to give a final spectacular show.

The reports were first denied Tuesday by Peter Rudge, the Stones' manager. But in Santiago, Isaac said: "Despite what Peter says, the negotiations are still going on."

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OCTOBER 6
Fruhbeck/
HAENDEL
New MSO Music Director Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos shares the podium with renowned violinist Yehudi Menuhin as he conducts one of Beethoven's celebrated D Major Concerto.
Prelude
BEETHOVEN
Egmont Overture
Violin Concerto in D
DVORAK
Symphony No. 8

Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos

DECEMBER 15
Mahler/
Bronfman
Under the dynamic baton of MSO Conductor Emeritus Zubin Mehta, the MSO presents an evening of Mahler's greatest music featuring Yehudi Menuhin as narrator about his life. Bronfman will perform Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto in C Minor.
Prelude
MUSSORGSKY
Khovanshchina Prelude
RACHMANINOFF
Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor
TCHAIKOVSKY
Symphony No. 4 in F Minor

Zubin Mehta

JANUARY 19
Hétu/
Quilico
Home-grown talent takes centre stage as Quilico sings Pierre Hetu's new composition in a programme featuring the premiere performances of Canada's two leading composers, John Weinzweig and Harry Somers. Quilico is a favorite with the Opera in Moscow, the Paris Opera and Covent Opera, Louis Quilico
Prelude
ROSSINI
Semiramide Overture
DVORAK
Slavonic Dances No. 1,2,3 and 8
Excerpts from Verdi and Rossini Operas
To Be Completed

Pierre Hetu

FEBRUARY 23
Latimer/
Horne
Acclaimed conductor Ferdinand Latimer returns to the podium for this last concert of the season and is joined by internationally renowned soprano Marilyn Horne who will also interpret some of Rossini's best-loved arias.
Prelude
ROSSINI
L'Italiana in Algeri
Cara, cara voce
La donna del lago
Mon bene
To Be Completed

Ferdinand Latimer

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